

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 to 18 were previously pending in this application. With this amendment, claims 1 and 17 have been amended and claim 6 has been cancelled. No new subject matter has been added with this amendment.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Examiner rejected all the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph because claim 1 lacks antecedent basis for the term "the cast alloy". Applicant has amended this claim to correct the drafting error, thereby obviating this rejection.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner also rejected claims 1-5, 7, 8, 12-15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Martis (U.S.P.N. 5340413) or Yoshizawa (U.S.P.N. 7141127). In that rejection the Examiner acknowledged that claims 6, 9-11, 16 and 18 would be allowable if the indefiniteness rejection in claim 1 was addressed, and the claims were placed into independent form. With this amendment Applicant has amended claims 1 and 17 to include the limitation from claim 6, thereby obviating this prior art rejection.

Appln No. 10/573,148

Reply to Office Action of December 17, 2008

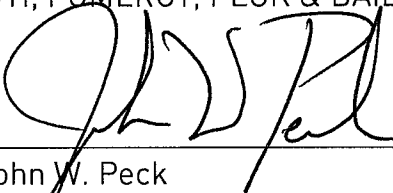
Conclusion

In light of the above amendments and remarks provided herein, Applicant respectfully requests the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge and fees due in connection with this application to Deposit Account No. 50-4407. Please show our docket number with any transaction to the Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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